GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
FINANCE
LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:17
ANSWERED ON:17.10.2008
OPIUM POLICY
Gandhi Smt. Maneka

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the criteria laid down for fixing the Minimum Qualifying Yield (MQY) and the number of farmers issued licenses for opium cultivation during the last three years;

(b) whether a uniform MQY is fixed by the Government in opium production across all the States;

(c) if so, the details thereof and if not the reasons therefor; and

(d) the steps taken by the Government to bring uniformity in the licensing process?

Answer

FINANCE MINISTER (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM)

(a) to (d) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT IN REPLY TO LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 17 FOR ANSWER ON FRIDAY , THE 17TH OCTOBER, 2008

The Minimum Qualifying Yield (MQY) is finalized annually in the light of average opium yield per hectare which depends on agro-climatic conditions of the region and also keeping in view the imperative need to control diversion of opium produce into illicit channels. As the average yield and the climatic conditions are not uniform, it is not possible to fix uniform MQY of opium production across all States. A Forewarning of MQY is also prescribed in the General Licensing Conditions to inform the cultivators well in advance regarding the MQY which they are expected to tender to be eligible for license in the succeeding Crop Year.

The number of farmers issued licenses for cultivation of opium during the last three years is as under:

Crop Year	Number of Cultivators licensed
2005-06	72,478
2006-07	62,658
2007-08	46,775

The General Conditions for grant of license to the opium cultivators are notified every year. All provisions of the General Conditions, except MQY, are equally applicable in all the three opium poppy growing states i.e. Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh.